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Review Article

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Outline of a Theory of Practice. PIERRE BOURDIEU. Richard Nice, Trans. Cambridge Studies in Social Anthropology, 16. New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 1977. viii + 248 pp., index, illustrations. $18.95 (cloth); $5.95 (paper).

Reproduction: In Education, Society and Culture. PIERRE BOURDIEU and JEAN-CIAUDE PASSERON. Richard Nice, Trans. SAGE Studies in Social and Educational Change, 5. London and Beverly Hills: SAGE Publications, 1977. xix + 254 pp., index, illustrations. $15.00 (cloth); $6.95 (paper).

The work of Pierre Bourdieu and his colleagues at the Centre for European Sociology in Paris resembles that of Durkheim and his associates of the Annee Sociolopique at least in conception and scope As Tom

Bottomore suggests in his foreword to Reproduction (pp vvi), the center possesses many of the characteristics of a “school” The collaboration of its members has a permanent institutional base, complete with a journal (Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales), which allows them systematically to engage in wide-ranging theoretical discussions and long-term research activities that encompass broad domains of social life In recent years the center’s principal empirical research concern has been with French higher education, although Bourdieu continues to draw upon his fieldwork with Kabyle Berbers conducted during the Algerian war and subsequent studies of Algerian workers in France In every case, the resulting studies are explicitly linked to the main cur rents of social theory, as the titles of the two books reviewed here unequivoc ally indicate Bourdieu s dominant influence is reflected in the center’s scholarly production Of a ,‘selective” list of fifty-two of its publications (in Reproduction, pp 237–241) that have appeared since 1964, twenty-three were written by Bourdieu alone, and he was coauthor of thirteen others

Bourdieu’s principal concern is what might be called the political economy of cultural meanings, because his theory of practice deals primarily with the reproduction and transmission of systems of meaning and how these shape and in turn are shaped by configurations of power and economic relations among groups and classes in different societies. This goal in itself is not unique in contemporary anthropological and sociological theory (for example, Sahlins 1976; Touraine 1977); what distinguishes the work of Bourdieu and his colleagues from most other social theorists is their insistence on elaborating their theoretical position in the context of specific ethnographic research instead of remaining primarily at the level of theoretical abstraction. Hence, in conception Bourdieu’s work complements and extends the largely Anglo-American “shift” to the study of meaning recently discussed by Boon (1978; compare Schneider 1978)

Unfortunately, the “theory of practice” is presented in both these studies in a manner that makes its elaboration and specific analysis hard to follow. One of the key arguments of Reproduction is that the most prestigious French academic and intellectual style involves the frequent use of opaque rhetorical slogans, “verbal incantation” and “exemplary exhibition” (p. 121) which result in a “semantic fog” that serves to establish the legitimacy of the transmitted pedagogical messages (pp. 108–ר1 4).

Paradoxically, the theory of practice is presented largely in the same obfuscatory style that Bourdieu and Passeron so incisively and ironically describe. Key sentences frequently range from 120 to 175 words (for example Reproduction, pp. 29, 30, 67; Outline, p. 78), the use of italics verges on the indiscriminate, and the authors constantly deviate from their principal arguments to explore secondary, but admittedly fascinating, issues. The analyses of Kabyle ethnography and the class origins of French university students are repeatedly interrupted by discussion of the finer points of Hesiod, Wittgenstein, Marx, Weber, Dostoyevsky, Sartre, Robert Murphy and Lionel Kasdan, Hegel, Durkheim, early American psychological anthropologists, Michel Crozier, and Marcel Proust. All this makes for exciting if eclectic reading, but the theory of practice promises so much that a more forceful presentation would have made it more effective.

Of the two studies, Outline is the more recent presentation of Bourdieu's theoretical vision. It is not merely a translation of the original edition (Bourdieu 1972); Bourdieu has excised or relegated to small print much of the ethnography of the original, based on his Algerian work, and has added major new sections that eleborate his key concepts. In essence, although it is difficult to summarize Bourdieu's complex presentation, the theory of practice is elaborated in opposition to what Bourdieu considers its two alternatives, both of which he depicts in their extreme formulations. One is a "purely" subjective, "primary" or phenomenological apprehension of the social world (for example, ethnomethodology) The other broad characterization is "objectivism," which he glossses as including everything from the functionalism of the 19305l to "structuralist hermeneutics." Bourdieu writes that all such theories seek to construct "the objective relations (e g. economic or linguistic) which structure practice and representations of practice" (p. 3). Levi-Strauss, whose "elementary structures" theory is at one point scathingly dismissed as being "infinitely impoverished" (p 70), is repeatedly singled out for attention , he criticisms of these two positions are effective despite their rather broad characterization, but they hardly (over new ground.

In any case, Bourdieu's theory in many ways mediates the two theoretical apprehensions of the social world that it opposes. In his own words, it is "a science of the dialectical relations between the

objective structures to which the objectivist mode of knowledge gives access and the structured dispositions [of “agents,” as Bourdieu calls social actors] within which these structures are actualized and which tend to reproduce them” (p. 3). The goal of the theory of practice, in Bourdieu’s italics, is to establish “a dialectic of the internalization of externality and the externalization of internality” (Outline, p.72).

What Bourdieu appears to be saying is that social practice in specific historical contexts produces “objective” structures (economic and power relations) that in turn produce cognitive and affective dispositions of the social world common to members of given social groups or classes. These linkages are often complicated and circular, as Figure 1 of Reproduction demonstrates. Bourdieu’s emphasis is on what he calls the “dialectical” relation of these elements in order to dispense with the assumption of fixed rules or structures

Avoidance of such assumptions is one of Bourdieu’s principal concerns He argues that an thropologists as observers have been prone to the “objectivist distortion” of representing social relations in terms of objects to be decoded rather than as concrete human activities. In one of his many inventive analogies, he compares the objectivist approach to writing an art history that ignores the social conditions in which works of art are created, circulated, and valued. An effective anthropological theory not only must break with native experience and native representations of this experience, as “objectivist” approaches have done; it must also question the presuppositions of the anthropological observer (compare Schutz 1967)

Bourdieu’s principal ethnographic examples concern the issues of parallel cousin marriage and the relation of the Kabyle agrarian calendar to other aspects of society Thus, he writes that informants’ discourse concerning marriage in Kabylia, as elsewhere in the Middie East, tends to emphasize the most remarkable moves, such as father’s brother’s daughter’s marriage, rather than the principle “from which these moves and all equally possible moves can be generated” (p. 19). In placing primary emphasis on genealogies and analytical problems derived from them, Bourdieu considers that anthropologists have ten ded to neglect the role of genealogists and the significance of the occasions when a genealogical representation of

relationships (as opposed to other representations) IS 111 voked In drawing up genealogies for analysis, he writes, anthropologists easily forget that genealogies are the product of multiple strategies and thus treat the usefulness of kinsmen, genealogically defined, as a resolved question (p. 35). In fact, he argues, the use of genealogies and relationships defined by them is dominant only in the legitimation of certain types of social situations. He analyzes in detail other approaches to the topic of FaBrDa marriage, including that of Levi-Strauss, and poses the question whether the genealogical definition of groups can be made, as “objectivists” do, without incorrectly postulating that “the group defines the agents and their interests more than the agents define groups in terms of their interests” (p. 30)

In short, he argues that genealogical knowledge in any society must be considered in the contexts in which it is used. Certainly there are few anthropologists who would take exception to this notion, and it is effectively practiced in most of the better “kinship”-oriented ethnographies of the last twenty or thirty years (for example, Scheffler 1965) Bourdieu’s insistence that kin relationships should be treated as something that people make and with which they accomplish things is likewise not exactly startling in its novelty, although his own meticulous description of the elaboration and manipulation of social identities and his excellent account of how anthropologists have historically framed certain questions of “kinship” to the exclusion of others is a welcome complement to earlier and concurrent work in the Middle East (for example, Cohen 1965; Peters 19(17. 1976; Eickelman 1976; Geertz n.d.) and of course elsewhere. For instance, Bourdieu indicates in detail how marriages that are genealogically identical may have different, even opposite meanings and may be the outcome of very different strategies involving a range of symbolic and material interests such as fertility, filiation, residence, inheritance, marriage, and the values of honor and prestige (pp. 43–52).

Again, much of Bobrdieu’s argument appears to be shaped by his preoccupation with Levi-Straussian structuralism to the exclusion of other currents of anthropological thought:

<quote>

When the anthropologist treats native kinship terminology as a closed, coherent system of purely logical relationships, defined once and for all by the implicit axiomatics of a cultural tradition, he prohibits himself from apprehending the different practical functions of the kinship terms and the relations which he unwittingly brackets (p 37)

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This may well be, but surely the approach that he so repeatedly attacks fails to characterize the work of most ethnographers today. Similarly, Bourdieu's preoccupation with the objectivist heresy seems to shape his otherwise splendid discussion of Kabyle notions of temporality. At first his discussion appears to be an ingenious elaboration of structuralist oppositions (see especially his elaborate chart on p 157) but his goal is always the further one of eliciting the conditions in which particular practices develop and the generative principles (not, he emphasizes, rules) by which they are produced (pp. 48, 60 63)

Bourdieu's theory involves three highly complex concepts: habitus, doxa, and symbolic capital. The use of Latin and Creek for two of his three concepts appears in part to signal an attempt to break with the ideological overtones of existing sociological vocabulary (Reproduction, p. x) although, as I have indicated, the entire form of his argument is framed by concurrent theoretical perspectives, as one would expect of any work in the social sciences In fact, his key propositions might have been rendered much more clearly if they were more explicitly related to attempts by other social anthropologists to deal with similar problems. Thus, habitus designates for Bourdieu "a system of lasting, transposable disposetions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of per perceptions, appreciations, and actions and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks" (p. 83) Yet the notion has shifting contextual connotations Elsewhere It is "the durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations" (p. 78) and "the product of history [which] produces individual and collective practices, and hence history, in accordance with the schemes engendered by history" (p 82) The notion provides the link between what Bourdieu considers to be "objective" structures and the cognitive structure's that they produce and that tend to

reproduce them Thus the Kabyle peasant “does not react to ‘objective conditions’ but to the practical interpretation which he produces of these conditions, and [sic] the principle of which is the socially constituted schemes of his habitus” (p. 116) Habitus cannot be derived from a fixed set of rules or conditionings, within the limits set “by the historically and socially situated conditions of Its production” It provides “an endless capacity to engender products —thoughts, perceptions, expressions, actions” (p 88) The term also can be applied to specific groups or classes, as when c lass consciousness is opaquely and redundantly defined as “the direct or indirect possession of a discourse capable of securing symbolic mastery of the practically mastered principles of the class habitus” (p. 83).

These formulations in most cases can be encompassed by the much clearer contemporary uses of the concept of culture in American anthropology, as, for instance, “an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life” (Geertz 1966:3) Bourdieu is aware of recent American work (for example, Outline, pp 236–237) but does not consider the implications of such work for his own conceptual scheme.

In a similar fashion, Bourdieu’s notion of doxa bears important resemblances to Foucault’s notion of episteme, which the latter (1973:xxii) defines as the epistemological field in which knowledge “manifests a history .. of its conditions of possibility.” For Bourdieu, every established social order has a tendency to produce, with varying degrees of success, “the naturalization of its own arbitrariness “The most important “mechanism [sic] that produces this effect is the dialectic between “objective chances and the agents’ aspirations, out of which arises the sense of limits, commonly called the sense of reality,” comprising a range of recognized orthodox and heterodox beliefs (p. 164) Such beliefs taken as a whole constitute “the universe of possible discourse,” the boundaries of which are practically constituted by “that which is undiscussed, unnamed, admitted without argument or scrutiny” (pp 169–170) Doxa then constitutes “the universe of that which IS taken for granted” (and perhaps not far removed from Schutz’ [1967] notion of common sense), the dominating groups or classes in any moment of crisis having an interest in defending the integrity of doxa and the

dominated classes in exposing its arbitrariness and bringing about an awakening of political consciousness (pp 169–170) that is. the consideration of other possibilities Unfortunately, in elaborating the concept Bourdieu moves furthest from his ethnographic presentation and relates it merely to the theoretical notions implicit in the writings of Weber and Marx, but not to contemporary figures, such as Foucault, who appear to be interested in developing the same general ideas.

Bourdieu’s third key notion is symbolic capital, which is [again in his italics) the “institutionally organized and guaranteed misrecognition” (p. 71) or concealment of the economic and material bases, by which the social order is made to appear legitimate. Symbolic capital is most effective “inasmuch, and only inasmuch, as it conceals the fact that it originates in ‘material’ forms of capital which are also, in the last analysis, the source of its effects” (p. 183). This is a rather confusing notion, for it appears that symbolic capital is both the concealer and that which is concealed. Bourdieu proceeds to indicate how family honor in Kabyle society, although misrecognized, ultimately derives from economic power and is readily convertible back into it, and how peasants “formerly” were inclined to misrecognize their labor as a “magical relationship” with the land (pp. 173–179) When applied to ethnographic examples in Kabylia, the notion of misrecognition is not always convincing, and even Bourdieu acknowledges that only the “complicity of collective bad faith” allows implicit exchanges based on misrecognition to persist (p. 173) In other words, peasants indeed recognize—here I use the term in its ordinary sense —the nature of the exchanges taking place. Now if Kabyle peasants are aware implicitly of the tie between symbolic capital and economic capital, it is not clear what is being misrecognized and by whom, and statements such as the following do not exactly make matters evident: “systems of classification … make their specific contribution to the reproduction of the power relations of which they are the product by securing the misrecognition, and hence the recognition, of the arbitrariness on which they are based” (p. 164) Bourdieu is a highly talented if eclectic sociologist and managed to write with clarity on such complex matters as cognitive style in earlier essays (for example, Bourdieu 1967). so it may be possible that in statements such as the preceding he is deliberately parodying the “mana of the Word’ of French “magesterial utterance,” which tends “to rule out the informative efficiency of the communication” (Reproduction, pp. 108–109). If so, this lack of clarity in textual construction is unfortunate, for Bourdieu and his

colleagues, in their emphasis on “dialectics” of various sorts, appear most concerned with exploring the important issue of how changes take place in systems of meaning, particularly those of complex societies

Bourdieu’s other examples of “misrecognition” accentuate the weakness of the concept as he presents it. Thus he states that the symbolic capital of art, like that of educational credentials, is misrecognized and opposed by most persons to the profane world of economics, although he writes that academic qualifications and art objects in a modern capitalist society, like money, have a conventional, fixed value in order to maximize their free circulation (pp. 187 197). This argument is difficult to accept. Practicing “native” artists, or at least some of them (for example, Grosser 1971) appear acutely aware of the basis for converting reputation and artistic production into economic resources Most academicians similarly are aware of the value of their credentials. In any case, such “misrecognized” forms of capital are surely, like money, subject to inflation and deflation, thus making “convertibility” less than predictable even for fully demystified entrepreneurs In almost any social group or class, some people are naive or cynical about its ideologies, and others may actively manipulate them; many even manage to take them for granted The denial of material and economic interest in Bourdieu’s chosen examples does not seem to be on the part of the “natives” themselves, or at least many of them, and hence the theoretical argument appears unnecessarily contrived.

Although Reproduction is an earlier study that has been translated unrevised from its first appearance in 1970 it is an essential complement to Outline. Whereas Outline is based on the analysis of a society that Bourdieu treats primarily as “traditional,” Reproduction elaborates the theory of practice in the context of culturally valued knowledge and educational institutions in class societies, with French higher education as the case in point. Unfortunately, this book also suffers from a number of weaknesses of presentation The translator, Richard Nice, is aware of this and points to subsequent work of the center in which certain themes are more effectively presented (p. xvii). Given the difficult presentation of the text, it would have been much more useful for the authors themselves to have indicated their present attitude toward their text. Part I, “Foundations of a Theory of Symbolic Violence,” was intended as the first full elaboration of the theory of practice, presented in the form of

eighty-three linked logical propositions and their glosses. Part II. “Keeping Order,” concerns French higher education.

The authors state that the book began with an empirical study of the effectiveness of French pedagogical communication. A guiding hypothesis quickly emerged, that pedagogic work is most effective when “the habitus [values?] it tends to inculcate (in this context, scholarly mastery of scholarly language) approximates the habitus accomplished by all prior pedagogical work and family upbringing” (pp. 71–73). The authors contend that French higher education has traditionally managed to be more effective than other educational systems (except possibly that of classical China) in converting social classifications into school classifications They further write that in recent years French education has reached a critical state because of an expansion that has compelled it to accommodate students lacking the necessary cultural and linguistic “capital” for comprehending traditional pedagogical messages, making it easier to discern the hidden presuppositions of the traditional pedagogical system (p. 99). To this end, they deal in incisive analytical detail with the rhetorical style and practice of French higher education, the processes of exclusion and selection associated with the examination system, and the means by which examinations are legitimized as neutral and independent of the class structure while actually tied close to it in terms of social selection; and they present data that suggest that the recent expansion in higher education has not substantially changed the relation of higher education to class structure. None of these arguments is new in itself, although the thoroughness with which their data are elaborated makes Part II the stronger section of the book.

Part I ranges for beyond the specific themes of Part II, for the authors intended for their theoretical propositions to have “universal” validity, that is to apply to all societies regardless of whether they possess formal educational institutions. To this end, their initial (and italicized) proposition is that “every power which manages to impose meanings and to impose them as legitimate by concealing the power relations which are at the basis of its force, adds its own specifically symbolic force to those power relations.” To deny this proposition, they continue “would amount to denying the possibility of a science of sociology” (p 4). The next sixty-five pages contain derivatory propositions, the total effect being that of a catechism. Given Bourdieu and Passeron’s concern with rhetorical style, it is

entirely possible again that this resemblance is intended. The basic notions of the theory of practice are set forth, again with emphasis on the fact that particular cultural meanings are recognized as legitimate to the extent that the power that makes their imposition possible is not fully seen. Presumably the perception of the “objective reality” or “truth” of their imposition is the sociologist’s privilege (p. x). Taken literally, of course, this argument implies that once power relations as the basis of legitimacy are realized, their legitimacy fails Without wishing to deny the possibility of sociology, I would point out that all the proposilion appears to say IS that ‘symbolic force” or “authority” is the legitimate exercise of power, that power thus exercised, conspiratorially or not, tends to serve the interests of some social groups and classes better than others, and that a tension often exists between power (and economic relations) and patterns of legitimacy, again familiar sociological themes

The intention of the authors was to juxtapose the two sections of the book to encourage their “mutual rectification,” but because the theoretical section of the book makes virtually no concrete reference to the second part, the relation between the two parts of the book is tenuous. The authors themselves acknowledge the “uneven development” of the “various moments” [sic] of the book and the tentative formulation of many of its propositions (p. ix) Indeed, Part II can be read independently without any loss of meaning. The deficiencies of Part I, in particular the loose wording of many of its key propositions (for exampie, habitus is at one point suggested to be to the social order what “genetic capital” is to the biological order, p. 32) were the subject of a detailed and sympathetic review that appeared shortly after its original publication (Petitat 1971)

When Bourdieu concentrates on the analysis of specific ethnographic issues he is most successful, and this suggests that the theoretical issues that concern him are better advanced in an ethnographically contextualized way than in “universal” theoretical pronouncements. The contexts that he has chosen are, moreover, particularly difficult ones The last time the Kabyle were used extensively as examples in a major study of social theory was in Durkheim’s Division of Labor (1966 [orig. 1893]) As for higher education, again it is appropriate to refer to Durkheim’s work, particularly to his neglected Evolution of Educational Thought (Durkheim 1977) In Evolution, as opposed to his earlier,

functional studies of primary education, Durkheim was explicitly concerned with the historical problem of change in dominant ideologies of higher education and how these ideologies were related to the conflicting interests of class and social groups and were manipulated by them As Cherkaoui (1976 1977) has suggested, this aspect of Durkheim's work is only now attracting renewed attention among both French- and English-speaking scholars because of the resurgent interest in the relation between systems of meaning and the social and historical contexts in which they are maintained. Durkheim implicitly argued that the study of education, especially higher education, could be as central to the study of complex societies as religion was to those that he considered "elementary " Bourdieu and Passeron have managed to suggest one ethnographic form that such a study may take and have managed to reintroduce the study of education as one of the main concerns of the sociology of knowledge. The theory of practice may not constitute the new synthesis of the social sciences, but the attention to contexts in which systems of meaning change and are challenged is evident in the ethnographic analyses of both Outline and Reproduction.

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Short Reviews

#title A Review of Nomad: A Year in the Life of a Qashqaʾi Tribesman in Iran

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Nomad: A ‘Year in the Life of a Qashqa’ Tribesman in Iran

By LOIS BECK. London: I. B. Tauris, 1991. Pp. xiv + 489. Price PB £14.95. 1-85043-364-X.

Lois Beck’s earlier The Qashqa’i of Iran (1986) joined the classic theme of state and dynastic politics to a finely grained historical account of the political and economic bases of a tribal elite in south-west Iran as they were transformed over the past two centuries. In the nineteenth century powerful Qashqa’i khans directly influenced dynastic authority, alternately enlarging and circumscribing its scope. Since the imposition of strong central authority in the 1930s and the drive of Reza Shah Pahlevi to curtail tribal autonomy, the authority and influence of the Qashqa’i tribal leadership became increasingly limited. Tribal leadership at all levels rested on persuasion rather than coercion. By the 1960s the authority of a subtribal headman (khakhoda) became functionally interchangeable with that of the formerly superior tribal leaders. Lower-level leaders still acted as mediators with state authority, but they had fewer resources with which to resist state encroachment. They operated in a political and economic climate that had become increasingly hostile to pastoral nomadism.

Nomad takes up where Qashqa’ left off: from late summer 1970 to summer 1971 Lois and Sam Beck joined the household of

Borzu Qermezi, headman since 1964 of the Qermezi subtribe of the Qashqa'i. Lois Beck kept a daily journal that tracked social and economic events, the activities of the group, and its discussions about where to move next and how to deal with landlords, gendarmes, local officials, and peasants. A wrong decision on where to move or on access to pastures and water could spell collective and personal disaster, and information to make sound decisions was not always available or reliable.

Beck focuses on how Borzu's interaction with his extended family and political group was affected by social and political forces 'as mediated through the specific constellation of local social relationships' (1). However, her book affords equal insight into a large cast of characters, male and female, young and old, as they experience these forces and respond to them. Borzu Qermezi equated his leadership with the continuation of the pastoral cycle and the future of nomadic pastoralism in an increasingly adverse political and economic environment.

At the time of her initial research in 1970–1 Beck, like the Qermezi, was unaware of the seriousness of the ecological, economic, and political crisis the Qermezi faced. Only with a second research trip in 1977 and the analysis of her data in 1987 did Beck realize that her account constituted an almost unique record of a pastoral nomadic society during a particularly critical transition. A severe drought in 1970 increased the debts of individual households to urban merchants and moneylenders, and state authorities intensified their hold on pastoralists, regulating access to pastures, controlling migratory schedules, manipulating the prices of pastoral products, and generally.jeopardizing the viability of pastoral nomadism. In the past the Qashqa'i were able to resist state incursions and resolve disputes over boundaries with a settled non- Qashqa'i peasantry and neighbouring tribal groups. By the 1960s the tide had turned against nomadic pastoralists. The pressures of the state, the market, and diminished access to pastures forced some Qermezi households and individuals to drop out of the pastoral nomadic cycle and assume new, settled livelihoods. Others sought to combine agriculture with pastoralism.

Borzu Qermezi's decisions were based on direct and daily encounters with peasants, minor bureaucrats, secret police, and the households in his group.

He mediated between opposing forces within the encampment and outside it, securing consensus in deciding when and where to move.

Nomad is organized by the progress of seasons, although the annual cycle serves as a peg for flashbacks to relevant issues in Qermezi and Qashqa’i history—earlier rivalries over leadership, relations with town merchants and moneylenders, water rights, and conflict with hired shepherds (77), townspeople, neighbouring tribes, and peasants. Other issues are unique to 1970–1. Borzu acquired a truck, for example, which led to unanticipated consequences, not all of them beneficial. Use of the truck necessitated camping along roads and intensified harassment by officials and other outsiders (70), as well as a changed relation with state authorities. Some of Beck’s finest narrative depicts the respect afforded visiting dignitaries, where state duplicity is met with a facade of obedience and—to bolster Borzu’s standing with outside dignitaries— exaggerated respect and attentiveness to his commands (which diminished rapidly once the outsiders were out of sight) (195–204). Perhaps fittingly, the narrative of a year in the life of Borzu ends with the ‘stunning’ announcement that the military Tribal Security Force had decided, for security reasons, to prohibit all Qashqa’i migrations until the shah had concluded his celebration of 2,500 years of Iranian monarchy. Borzu and his small group of nomads were thus frozen in place for six weeks in a hostile environment with little shelter, water, or grazing (405).

Nomad offers more than a year in the life of a Qashqa’i headman. A thorough index and detailed appendices facilitate tracking the activities and actions of other Qermezi. Beck’s photographs of people and situations make the personalities and events come alive. Undergraduates, sometimes intimidated by academic monographs, will find Nomad ‘user-friendly’. It invites readers to trace how various key people, both women and men, participate in and react to the political and economic situations faced by the group and contribute to its decision-making. The author’s ‘voice’ organizes the monograph, but the voices of the Qermezi Qashqa’i are heard throughout.

Beck’s book offers a nomad’s-eye view of major political and economic change by depicting the daily, incremental events pastoralists responded to

and how they occasionally reshaped the social and economic milieu in which they lived. For this reason, it carries an interest far beyond the confines of Iran. It is an excellent addition to the literature on nomadic pastoralism in the last ‘half of the twentieth century.

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‘ABD AL-KARIM GHALLAB, *Ta’rikh al-Haraka al-Wataniwa al-Maqhribiyya: Min Nihayat Harb al-RIfiyya ila I’lan al-Istiqlal* (History of Moroccan Nationalism: From the End of the Riffian War to the Announcement of Independence) (Casablanca: S.N.E.D., 1976). Pp. 351. Illus. DH 18.

Most of the primary historiographical research on North Africa continues to appear in European languages. Even the essays of Moroccan historians, such as Laroui, appear only belatedly in Arabic translation. However, this situation is rapidly being reversed. As an example, earlier this year in Rabat, Aljmad Tawfiq presented and defended in Arabic an excellent dissertation on the social history of the Moroccan town of Demnat in the late nineteenth century. In the meantime, the popular demand for discussions of historical themes continues to be met by nonhistorians. Because of the scope of the book under review, its theme, and Ghallab’s position as a member of the

executive committee of Morocco’s Istiqlal party and editor of its Arabic-language newspaper, it has provoked an animated discussion in the cultural supplements to Morocco’s daily newspapers and monthly reviews.

Ghallab distinguishes between nationalism and the nationalist movement. He defines nationalism as the “defense of the integrity of the nation against any form of conquest, or exploitation by force or the threat of it” (9). In this broad context, he argues that Moroccans have resisted all territorial incursions, including those of the Romans, Portuguese, English, French, and Spanish. The resistance movements of ‘Abd al-Karlm in the Rif, Ma’ al-‘Ayntn in the south, and M^ia u Hammu, he argues, must also be seen in this light. Yet because of the nature of the recent colonial experience, the nationalist movement, which Ghallab considers to have begun in 1926, brought a “new meaning” (14) to Moroccan nationalism. In exploring this theme he discusses various aspects of the “unity and fragmentation” (*tawhld wa-tamziq*) of Moroccan society as indicated by such phenomena as the “royal progresses” (*barakat*) of precolonial sultans and the end of the possibilities of “fragmentation” with the end of the twenties.

Historians may be uneasy with Ghallab’s definition of nationalism, since it presupposes the existence of national sentiment and does not explore the nuances of such sentiment in specific historical contexts. But this is not a book to be judged in professional terms. Its primary value is the detailed vision it gives of how a Moroccan intellectual perceives and presents the history of his country, thus making it, as Ghallab says, a “living” part of the present (7). As is appropriate for a popular work, sources are not always specified. The author promises a sequel to the present book which will carry his discussion into the early years of independence. This sequel will be of interest both for its contination of the interpretation of the nationalist movement undertaken in the first volume and for its value as a primary source, since Ghallab was an active participant in many of the events he will describe.

Dale F. Eickelman

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#title Book Review of Golden Roads: Migration, Pilgrimage and Travel in Mediaeval and Modern Islam

#author Dale F. Eickelman

#date 1994

#source British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 21, No. 2 (1994), pp. 255–256. <[[http://www.jstor.org/stable/195479][jstor.org/stable/195479]]>

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GOLDEN ROADS: MIGRATION, PILGRIMAGE AND TRAVEL IN MEDIAEVAL AND MODERN ISLAM. Edited by IAN RICHARD NETTON. Richmond (Surrey), Curzon Press, 1993. xvii, 193pp. £35 (hb), £16.99 (pb).

Pilgrimage, migration and travel are pre-eminently acts of the imagination, important in forging multiple senses of community and—among Muslims—leading to a heightened identification with Islam and with fellow Muslims. In his introductory comments, Netton stresses the archetypal antecedents of each form of travel in Islam: the Prophet Muhammad’s hijra (migration) from Mecca to Medina in 622 AD, the ‘Farewell’ hajj (pilgrimage) in 632 AD, and the concept of rihla (travel) in search of religious knowledge (‘Um). Netton views the contributions to his volume as collectively demonstrating ‘a vibrant, dynamic, fluid and, above all, unmonolithic Islam, uncircumscribed by the rigid caesuralism or the epistemes of a Michel Foucault’ (p.x). Foucault’s epistemes and perhaps also the rhythmic breaks of modem verse—my dictionary’s definition for ‘caesuralism’—are less

confining than Netton implies, but his remark prepares the reader for the ensuing diversity of approaches.

The volume is unevenly balanced. The sections on hijra and hajj consist of only two chapters each; the final section on rihla contains seven, and is the only one in the book where several studies closely complement one another. Netton characterizes the opening paper to the migration section, Nasr's 'Structure of Society in Pre-Islamic Arabia and the Impact of the Hijra' (pp.3–10) as 'a brief traditional account'. Nasr asserts that the 'tribe was the political unit for the Arabs', but does not distinguish ideas of tribe from those of kinship and assumes a 'nomadic nature' for all tribes, which Tost their toughness' as they became 'more modernised or civilised' (p.6). Some readers may be reassured to know that pre-Islamic tribal confederations 'had analogies with a modern democratic system', but his lack of distinction between types of tribal leadership ('Master, Chief, Shaykh [and] Amir' are used interchangeably) and the assertion that 'the sons of the chief were chosen as successor to the father' (except when they were not) suggest that the rich materials on seventh-century Arabian social organization still await convincing interpretation and analysis. Roger Webster's essay focuses on the latter-day metaphorical use of hijra in disseminating Wahhabi doctrine, whose 'universality' has, for all practical purposes, been confined to the regions of Al Sa'ud dynastic rule. Webster's discussion of trade and tribute states details the practical articulation of early Saudi legitimacy and succession, with Wahhabi doctrine and the use of oil wealth in recent years to buttress claims of the regime's 'moral integrity' to the 'traditionally minded' (p.25).

The section on pilgrimage consists of a chapter by G. R. Hawting, who explains how control over the Ka ba and the pilgrimage to Mecca ceased to be crucial to the caliph's 'prestige and even legitimacy' after the caliphate moved to Damascus. He cautions, however, that it is difficult to tell how much the source material, most of which dates from the third Islamic century, has 'been reworked, consciously or subconsciously ... to make it accord with how things "must have been"' in the first Islamic century (p.36). Dominique Urvoy shows how pilgrims and scholarly travel from Islamic Spain to the east progressively declined as the region became autonomous.

Opening the section on rihla literature, Netton discusses the ‘pilgrim paradigm’ implicit in the Travels of Ibn Battuta. Netton suggests the work’s literary precedents and conveys the ‘exuberant’ delight of medieval Muslim travellers in their search for knowledge, notwithstanding their realization of divisions in the Muslim world. Netton relates their ambivalence toward the Christian presence and their propinquity—boats carried both Muslims and Christians together to the Holy Land, and on occasion Christian rulers showed more charity than their Muslim counterparts by paying the rescue fees of indigent shipwrecked Muslim pilgrims (pp.66–67). Ross Dunn’s chapter stresses the importance on the Muslim frontiers of ‘reasonably literate, urbane, and cosmopolitan individuals, men like Ibn Battuta, who represented the values of scripturalist Islam’ (p.79), in contrast to scholars who postulate sharp dichotomies of rural and urban, centre and periphery. C.F. Beckingham cautions that medieval Muslim travel literature is a literary form which may not reflect travels which the narrators actually undertook. The remaining chapters, although interesting, are less well integrated into the collection—nineteenth-century Algerian dissidents transported to Corsica and Guyana (Fanny Colonna), Ignaz Goldziher’s 1873–74 study tour of the Near East (Lawrence Conrad), and two essays on Najib Mahfuz’s Rihlat Ibn Fattuma, a parody of Ibn Battuta (R. El-Enany and Fatma Moussa-Mahmoud).

Golden Roads, based on a 1989 conference, closely follows another edited volume on the same themes—Muslim Travellers: Pilgrimage, Migration, and the Religious Imagination, edited by Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori (London, 1990). It is unfortunate that Netton did not comment on this prior volume in his introduction, as it might have highlighted the distinctive features of his own.

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY,

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DALE F. EICKELMAN

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#title People of the Maldive Islands Book Review

#author Dale F. Eickelman

#date May 01 1982

#source Journal of Asian Studies (1982) 41 (3): 620.
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#topics book review

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People of the Maldive Islands. By Clarence Maloney. Bombay: Orient Longman, 1980. xi + 4-441 pp. Illustrations, Bibliography, Index. Rs. 85.

The Maldives are an isolated cluster of islands located about 450 miles southwest of Sri Lanka. For over 800 years, these islands have been Muslim but, like other Indian Ocean island and coastal communities, have been influenced by highly complex cultural cross-currents. Because the Maldives have been almost unknown ethnographically—the nominal British control relinquished in 1965 left little written residue—Clarence Maloney's study, based primarily on field research conducted in 1974 — 1975, is appropriately wide-ranging. The book is about equally divided between culture history and a clearly written general ethnography, which contains particularly interesting sections on Islam as locally elaborated, recent shifts from a largely subsistence economy based on fishing to one slightly more diversified, and local political life, including ties between the political elite and commercial interests. This study provides a useful point of departure for further research and a convenient reference work for scholars interested in this particular component of Indian Ocean civilizations.

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#title Review of Knowing One Another: Shaping an Islamic Anthropology

#author Dale F. Eickelman

#date March 1990

#source American Anthropologist, Volume 92, Issue 1, Pages 240-41. <[[https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.1990.92.1.02a00500][doi.org/10.1525/aa.1990.92.1.02a00500]]>

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#topics

Mansell Publishing (distr. by Publishers Distribution Center, Rutherford, NJ), 1988. 200 pp. $52.50 (cloth).

Dale F. Eickelman

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Davies argues that Islamic anthropology, though learning from Western approaches, is part of an “islamization” of knowledge, “a movement that seeks to ground the quest for knowledge in the eternal principles of Islam” (p. ix). Islamic anthropology begins with the “clear and unitary” base of “the world view of Islam,” the intellectual structure of which is derived from eternal Qur'anic concepts with their own “inherent logic,” the history of their interpretation, and the diverse present-day situational contexts in which

these understandings operate (pp. 26, 53-56, 63). Given the significance of the Qur'an in the Muslim world view, Davies suggests that an Islamic anthropology, like the best of classical Muslim scholarship, pays close attention to clusters of related Quranic terms (for which, unfortunately, no glossary is provided).

The "essential openness" of the conceptual base of Islamic anthropology "makes it a dialogue in which Muslim and non-Muslim can participate" (p. 9). Indeed, "the ideas, questions and evaluations of the Islamic an thro- pologists are informed in a dialogue with the people they study." The Islamic anthropologist, albeit "influenced by his own social and cultural background," aspires to rise above ethnocentrism and considers ethnography not as "static reportage" but as "dynamic process" (p. 137). If Western anthropology tends to collapse history into a "Malinowskian reformulation" (p. 140), Islamic anthropology does not because all communities are seen as dynamically engaged and interconnected (p. 126). An Islamic anthropology aims at "knowing one another," a literal translation of a Qur'anic verse (Sura 49:13). In it, all sys- terns of thought and action are "consonant endeavours of a common humanity" (pp. 6, 174).

In contrast, Davies argues that the various modern Western anthropologies, despite their claims to universality, interpret "other" societies and make them explicable only in terms of reference that are firmly rooted in the "intellectual tradition and discourses of western civilization" (p. 25). In her view the modern use of the term "other," like "small-scale," "non-literate," and "peasant," serves merely as a euphemism for "primitive" (p. 30).

Parts of Davies' argument are compelling, such as her useful reminder, following Asad, that "western" anthropology, like all forms of knowledge, is shaped and valued within specific practices of power and authority. Likewise persuasive are her detailed criticisms of other promissory essays on possible Islamic anthropologies, which in her judgment offer little more than a Western anthropology conducted by Muslims or which impute Muslim antecedents to the Western social sciences. However, the characteristics that Davies claims for a conceptually open "Islamic" anthropology have already emerged, even if in vigorously contested forms, in "non-Islamic" anthropology—"dialogic inquiry" inspired by Bakhtin; a use of "other" not

tied to the idea of the primitive, which appears in all sorts of scholarship from psychoanalysis to gender studies; a close attention to language and communication, associated with Praguian linguistics; and ideas of history and of historical thought considerably more nuanced than those derived from Malinowski that Davies cites.

In short, the Islamic anthropology advocated by Davies sounds very much like other anthropologies, except for the efforts to justify it in terms of perceived Qur'anic principles and to encourage Muslim scholars to use anthropological approaches to understand "the pressing concerns of modernity." Nonetheless, the overall tone of this book is generous and free from the strident polemic that has accompanied other formulations of Islamic anthropology. Unfortunately, the book's prohibitive price severely limits its accessibility.

#title Book Review: Knowing One Another: Shaping an Islamic Anthropology

#author Dale F. Eickelman

#date 1990

#source American Anthropologist, Vol 92, Issue 1, pp. 240–41.

#lang en

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#topics Anthropology

#DELETED temporarily

Knowing One Another: Shaping an Islamic Anthropology. Merryl Wyn Davies. Islamic Futures and Policy Studies. New York: Mansell Publishing (distr. by Publishers Distribution Center, Rutherford, NJ), 1988. 200 pp. 552.50 (cloth).

Dale F. Eickelman

Dartmouth College

Davies argues that Islamic anthropology, though learning from Western approaches, is part of an “islamization” of knowledge, “a movement that seeks to ground the quest for knowledge in the eternal principles of Islam” (p. ix). Islamic anthropology begins with the “clear and unitary” base of “the world view of Islam,” the intellectual structure of which is derived from eternal Quranic concepts with their own “inherent logic,” the history of their interpretation, and the diverse present-day situational contexts in which these understandings operate (pp. 26, 53–56, 63). Given the significance of the Qur’an in the Muslim world view, Davies suggests that an Islamic anthropology, like the best of classical Muslim scholarship, pays close attention to clusters of related Quranic terms (for which, unfortunately, no glossary is provided).

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#title Book Review: People of Sale: Tradition and Change in a Moroccan City 1830-1930

#author Dale F. Eickelman

#date 1978

#source American Anthropologist, Vol. 80, Page 441.

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#topics book review, anthropology

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People of Sale: Tradition and Change in a Moroccan City 1830-1930. Kenneth L. Brown. Harvard Studies in Urban History. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976. xvi + 265 pp. $18.00 (cloth).

Dale F. Eickelman Institute for Advanced Study

This book is the most significant monograph on Middle Eastern urban forms to have appeared since Lapidus' Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages (1967). Based on published sources, archives, and oral historical data, Brown explores two related themes: the patterns of social relations that constituted the "fabric" of urban life for the period covered by his study and the impact on the social order of the incorporation of Morocco into the world capitalist system after the 1860s, followed in 1912 by the imposition of colonial rule.

Brown makes the important point, confirmed by other recent social historical and ethnographic studies on Morocco, that status and social relations were not determined by any fixed characteristics. Attributes such as Arab and Berber, religious learning, patrilineal descent, and membership in occupational groups and religious brotherhoods constituted "cultural categories, not concrete, isolated social aggregations or classes." Social relations were instead "characterized by a pattern of shifting coalitions, of networks of patrons and clients" based upon common interests that were "sometimes strengthened (but not determined) by descent, marriage, or friendship" (p. 6). The "people of Sale," whom Brown is particularly successful at describing, are the elite, "those persons who dominated cross-cutting social networks" (p. 56). He emphasizes that the elite "were not leaders of powerful extended families but men who controlled clientele groups held together by mutual interests, not ties of consanguinity" (p. 60).

The long-range consequence of capitalist and colonial penetration, Brown's second theme, was to create a situation in which a few entrepreneurs amassed considerable wealth while the majority of small merchants,

artisans, and peasants became increasingly impoverished and social mobility became more difficult. Brown's original contribution to this familiar theme is twofold. First, he analyzes in detail and over long historical periods the consequences for particular crafts and mercantile activities. Second, he argues that the "local patterns of relationships," which he meticulously describes, remain largely intact and to date have not led to a "class-based social structure" (p. 224).

The argument that no single institutional setting provided a self-contained framework for social action is convincing, but the sociological analysis of how individuals perceived their "interests" in a multiplicity of such settings and manipulated the intricate range of identities and loyalties available to them is not always made explicit. Nonetheless, this book is a major ethnographic and social historical contribution to the study of Middle Eastern urban society.

Very Short Review

#title A Short Review of Essays in Sudan Ethnography

#author Dale F. Eickelman

#date October 1, 1975

#source Middle East Studies Association Bulletin, Volume 9, Issue 3, Page 57. <[[https://www.jstor.org/stable/44824122][jstor.org/stable/44824122]]>

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#topics Anthropology

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IAN CUNNISON and WENDY JAMES (eds.). *Essays in Sudan Ethnography Presented to Sir Edward Evans-Pritchard* (New York: Humanities Press, 1972). Pp. xvi + 256. $12.50.

The twelve studies contained in this volume are primarily of regional significance but are of uniformly high quality. Two in particular merit a wider audience.

Ian Cunnison addresses himself to the significance of blood money and vengeance and relates his materials to elsewhere in the Muslim world and Africa.

Talal Asad discusses the structure of political inequality among the Kababish and the complex ideology associated with the concept of ‘tribe’ in a colonial setting. As with his other studies of the Kababish, this one constitutes a valuable contribution to political anthropology.

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